

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8, 15 and 17-22 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 15, 17-19 and 22 have been amended and Claim 16 has been canceled by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Karasawa et al in view of Applicants' admitted prior art (AAPA) and Irinoda; Claims 15 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rasovsky et al. in view of AAPA; and Claims 2-6, 8, 16-20, and 22 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. In light of this indication, independent Claim 15 has been amended to include the indicated allowable subject matter recited in Claim 16. Accordingly, the rejection of Claims 15 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rasovsky et al. in view of AAPA is moot.

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Karasawa et al. in view of AAPA and Irinoda. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Fig. 11 of Irinoda discloses a structure where a silicon nitride film 512 (corresponding to the silicon nitride film of claim 1 according to the outstanding Office Action) is formed between interlayer insulating films 503 and 611 (corresponding to the first and second oxide films of claim 1 according to the outstanding Office Action). The silicon nitride films 512 and 612 shown in Fig. 11 corresponds to a silicon nitride film 114 of the structure shown in Figs. 6 and 7. *where "114" is that 1042. The point is using the nitride*

The steps of obtaining the structure shown in Figs. 6 and 7 are shown in Figs. 5A-5E. As apparent from these figures and the corresponding description (see column 11, lines 28- *for etch stop-
patterning
& diffusion
region*

36), the silicon nitride film 104 is used as a mask for etching the interlayer insulating film 102 (corresponding to the interlayer insulating films 503 and 611 of Fig. 11) to obtain the structure of Fig. 5E from that of Fig. 5D.

Therefore, in Irinoda, to form a ring 105A accurately on the sidewall of a contact hole 102A (on a part of the interlayer insulating film 102), by forming a silicon nitride film 104, which is a layer of different material from an interlayer insulating film 102, on an interlayer insulating film 102, a silicon nitride film 104 is used as a mask in forming a contact hole 102A.

On the other hand, in amended Claim 1 of the present invention, which recites that a silicon nitride film is formed on the whole surface of said first oxide film, the structure cannot accommodate anything, (such as a ring 102A of Irinoda) but a silicon nitride 104 on an interlayer insulating film 102.

Therefore, regarding the structure of amended claim 1, a silicon nitride film disclosed in Irinoda would not motivate one skilled in the art to add a silicon nitride film on the structure disclosed in Fig. 1 of Karasawa.

Moreover, the substrates disclosed Karasawa and Irinoda are both bulk substrates, and do not disclose or suggest an SOI substrate or the structure of an isolation insulating film. Therefore, it would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to form the structure of Claim 1 of the present invention from the structure of the admitted prior art (Fig. 22) in view of the disclosures of Karasawa and Irinoda, to shorten the lifetime of carriers of a semiconductor layer below an isolation insulating film.

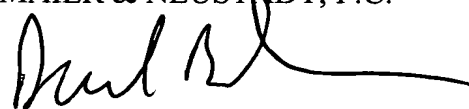
Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent Claim 1 and each of the claims depending therefrom are also allowable.

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Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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